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ABSTRACT

To determine what pedagogical uses the primary trait system might serve apart from providing a means to assess students' writing, data were collected from 11 elementary and junior high school teachers who had participated in an earlier week-long workshop on primary trait scoring. Participating teachers were asked to complete a log of their activities in a target class to provide information on the frequency of writing instruction, topics taught during the class, assignments given, use of primary trait scoring in specific ways such as the formulation of assignments, and the nature of prewriting activities. Writing assignments, scoring guides, and handouts were also collected. In addition, each teacher was observed by project staff in the classroom at least once. Following the observation, the teacher was interviewed about what had occurred in the class. During the interview, questions about activities reported on the log form were also clarified. Finally, on two occasions, teachers were asked to attend "booster" meetings to discuss their activities, share problems and solutions, and report specific assignments they had created. Their responses reported the following uses for primary trait scoring: clarifying the objectives of the lesson, providing a way to formulate assignments, providing a means to analyze and to respond to students' writing, helping students evaluate and respond to the writing of their peers, providing a means for assessing students' papers, and affecting students' reading ability. (HOD)

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Uses of the Primary Trait System:
A Collaborative Descriptive Research Project

Writing Research and Resources Project
Final Report

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Table of Contents

Summary/Abstract

Part I: Background of the Project
- Introduction 1
- A Review of the Relevant Literature 3
- The Primary Trait System 5
- The Problem 9
- Methodology 10
- Documentation 11

Part II: Teacher Vignettes
- Context Variables 12
- Vignette: Teacher A 15
- Vignette: Teacher B 18
- Vignette: Teacher C 22
- Vignette: Teacher D 26
- Vignette: Teacher E 29
- Vignette: Teacher F 30
- Vignette: Teacher G 34
- Vignette: Teacher H 37
- Vignette: Teacher I 42
- Vignette: Teacher J 45
- Vignette: Teacher K 48

Part III: Uses of PTS
- Diagnosis 52
- Formulating Assignments 52
- Analyzing Students' Writing 53
- Responding to Students' Writing 53
- Evaluating/Grading 54
- Peer Evaluation 54
- Improved Reading 55

Part IV: Discussion and Conclusions 57

Bibliography 62

Appendices:
I. Forms and Documentation
II. Feedback to Teachers

Abstract

The Primary Trait System (PTS) was devised by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in order to score large numbers of natural writing samples. Essentially, PTS seeks to judge the writer's ability to achieve the purpose of his/her writing, whether the purpose is expressive, explanatory, or persuasive.

The Writing Research and Resources Project at CEMREL was interested in finding out what pedagogical uses PTS might serve, apart from the obvious one of providing a means to assess students' writing. Therefore, project staff in collaboration with 11 teachers devised the study reported here. It is important for the reader to realize that the primary goal of the study was a descriptive one: What uses of PTS would teachers discover in their classrooms?

In varying numbers, teachers reported the following uses:

- PTS helped clarify the objectives of the lesson;
- PTS provided a way to formulate assignments;
- PTS provided a means to analyze and to respond to students' writings;
- PTS helped peers evaluate and respond to the writing of other students;
- PTS provided a means for assessing students' papers;
- PTS affected students' reading ability.

The report which follows describes the study's methodology and results. For a discussion of specific assignments and scoring guides developed by teachers and students in the project, the reader is referred to the accompanying report, "Sample Exercises and Scoring Guides."

Part I: Background of the Project

Background of the Project

Introduction

This report is the culmination of a collaborative effort which has occurred over a period of more than five years among many people interested in the improvement of writing instruction and assessment. Among the principal collaborators have been CEMREL, Inc , the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Richard Lloyd-Jones, Carl Klaus and others of the University of Iowa and the Southeast Iowa Writing Project, eleven teachers from three school districts who participated in the field study reported for the first time in this report, and the National Institute of Education (NIE), which has provided funding for the effort. In addition, many teachers have served as reviewers and testers of drafts or experimental versions of two publications which are products of the project: Composing Childhood Experience: An Approach to Teaching and Learning in the Elementary Grades and Composing Adolescent Experience: An Approach to Teaching and Learning in the Junior High Grades. Other individuals have given advice and have commented on various aspects of the project.

The proposal for the Writing Research and Resources Project grew out of CEMREL s work with teachers who were testing some CEMREL developed expressive writing materials in the late 1970s. The teachers complained that assessment of expressive writing was difficult because standardized tests were not related to the aims of expressive writing. CEMREL entered a collaborative relationship with NAEP to determine whether NAEP's newly-developed assessment tool, Primary Trait Scoring (PTS), would be helpful to the teachers in assessing writing and, further, to learn whether or not this assessment technique had implications for instruction that could be translated into usable classroom application.

CEMREL worked with staff from NAEP and with Richard Lloyd-Jones and Carl Klaus at the University of Iowa to develop a guidebook for teachers which would acquaint them with the Primary Trait System (PTS) and would provide a starting point for instructional as well as evaluative use of the System.

Klaus became the principal author of that book, the experimental version of which was completed in 1978, and of the subsequent guidebook which was to serve the same purpose for junior high level teachers. Both guidebooks were published in final form in 1982, after a lengthy process of review and revision.

In the spring of 1982, three school districts in the metropolitan St. Louis area were selected to collaborate in a study of the instructional uses of PTS. Districts were invited to indicate their interest in having teachers participate in the study, and were asked to involve teachers who had had some training and experience in the teaching of writing. The rationale for such selection was that such teachers would already be "converts" to process writing. Teachers had the option of agreeing to participate or not. The study was limited to three districts because of time and funding constraints. Fourteen teachers volunteered to participate. As it turned out, several of the volunteers had little or no training in how to teach writing and in fact volunteered because they wanted just such training.

The first part of that training was provided in a week-long workshop at CEMREL in June, during which teachers were given an introduction to PTS and worked with CEMREL staff to explore what the instructional uses might be and to make plans for how they might be implemented. Throughout that week and throughout the project, the emphasis has been on collaborative research: teachers have been full partners with project staff in arriving at the findings here presented. Two participating teachers were lost over the summer because financial cutbacks in their district resulted in their being laid off, another teacher opted out of the project in the fall for personal reasons. Eleven teachers continued to participate until the end of the data collection in mid November.

The intent of the workshop and the subsequent field study was not to persuade teachers to use PTS or to prescribe how that use ought to occur, but rather to give them the available information about it, to help them gain an understanding of it, to support them in whatever way possible during the collaborative effort, and to describe the use they made or did not make of PTS.

It should be pointed out again that the purpose of this "field test" phase of the project was descriptive. Project staff wanted to observe what uses teachers could devise for PTS, especially in instructional modes. Lloyd-Jones (1977), Klaus (1982), Cooper (1977), Spandel and Stiggins (1980) and Spandel (1981) have all described the value for evaluation which PTS holds. However, the literature does not include any discussion of the instructional possibilities inherent in PTS.

This problem of instructional use is complicated by the lack of a clearly articulated and commonly accepted definition of what a "primary trait" is. This lack of definition is by no means unique to PTS. We must begin by admitting, along with Cooper and Odell (1977), that "there is no single set of terms and no single well-established, widely shared body of knowledge that constitutes modern discourse theory." This understanding is critical since the writers of research on writing tend not to define their terms; to use terms which seem to be identical but which, on reflection, turn out to be homonyms; and to assume certain basic premises which may or may not have been tested in classrooms.

A Review of Relevant Literature

Until fairly recently, most style handbooks have paid attention to modes of discourse: narration, description, exposition, and argumentation. In 1971, Kinneavy published A Theory of Discourse in which he argued that purpose is all. "The aim of discourse determines everything else in the process of discourse " For Kinneavy, modes are important only as the means for accomplishing a given purpose. He suggests that a theory of language and a theory of discourse would be "crowned" by a framework of purposes of language. He identifies four major purposes:

a. Reference discourse: this includes scientific, explanatory, and informative discourse and is intended to "designate or reproduce reality." It is characterized by concern for factuality, comprehensiveness, and careful use of inductive and deductive reasoning. It focuses on the subject at hand.

b. Persuasive discourse: this is intended to induce the audience to choose or to prompt the reader to action. The focus is on the audience.

c. Expressive discourse: this articulates the writer's personality or point of view. Its focus is on the writer.

d. Literary discourse: This attempts to create a language structure worthy of appreciation in its own right.

For Kinneavy, different purposes entail different thought processes, and result in pieces of discourse which have distinctive stylistic features and organizational patterns. Skill in accomplishing one purpose does not imply skill in accomplishing other purposes. One may be able to write a good project report, but fail to write persuasive letters.

In addition to purpose, current discourse theorists have tried to elucidate the importance of audience on the writer's use of language. This is not a new concern. Aristotle talks about the requisites of persuasion: establishing a plausible ethos, creating a desired attitude in the audience, and demonstrating the truth--real or apparent--of the arguments. Nevertheless, audience has received new attention from discourse theorists. Moffett (1968) describes the relationship between writer and audience using a metaphor of physical space.

In the interior monologue, writer and audience are identical; there is no separation. Dialogue separates the two, although they re still close. Finally one writes to an audience which is both large and absent. At this extreme, the writer receives no feedback from the audience. Moffett describes how changes in the speaker-subject-audience relationships parallel changes in intellectual development but he rejects the notion that any one relationship is more important than any other.

Primary Trait System

The preceding discussion provides a background for understanding Lloyd-Jones' work in PTS (1977). Lloyd-Jones begins by defining "writing" as "discourse", which he discusses in terms of its aims, which relate to the functions of language, and in terms of its features, which are the separate elements, devices, and mechanisms of language. Judgments about the quality of writing, he says, are primarily related to its aims. Yet to be informative about those judgments, one must be able to describe the writing in terms of its features. He then differentiates two kinds of holistic tests. It is the second kind that concerns us. PTS, he says, "isolates subcategories of the universe of discourse and rates writing samples in terms of their aptness within the prescribed range." PTS "is potentially more informative," he concludes.

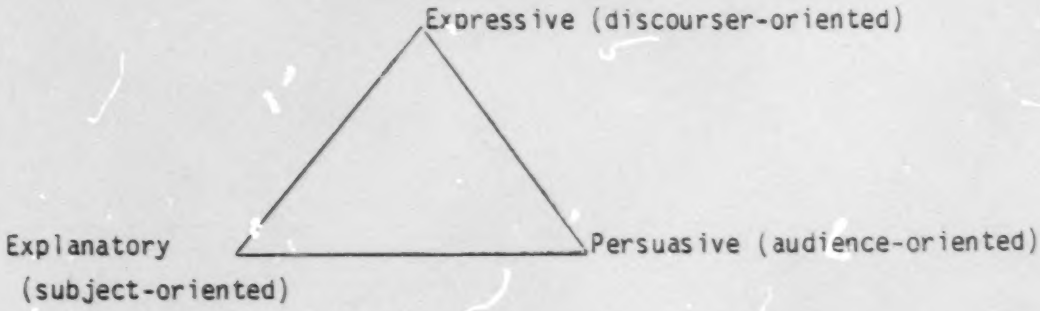
From this, we draw the following conclusions:

1. Discourse has both aims and features.
2. Judgments of quality say something of the aim.
3. To understand those judgments, we examine the features. Lloyd-Jones says: "A precise description or census of writing skills is far richer in information if the observations are categorized according to the purpose of the prose. The goal of Primary Trait System is to define precisely what segment of discourse will be evaluated (e.g. presenting rational persuasion between social equals in a formal situation)..."

Lloyd-Jones et al devised the primary traits a posteriori while we are trying to think of them a priori:

> "Perhaps in an ideal world of brilliant rhetoricians one would know in advance the features which would define a 2 or a 4 paper, but we took papers gathered in trial runs, examined them carefully to see what features actually were chosen to solve the rhetorical problem, and then wrote the descriptions to conform with the expectations established by the sample. Usually we found many quite legitimate solutions which we had not imagined."

To help categorize the writings at which they looked, Lloyd-Jones and his colleagues developed a triangular model, based largely on Kinneavy'e purposes of discourse:



From this categorization of purpose, Lloyd-Jones et al developed writing tasks which, they hoped, would elicit a primary trait associated with purpose and audience. Examples of such traits and assignments reported in Klaus (1981 and 1982) include:

1. Sometimes people write just for the fun of it. This is a chance for you to have some fun writing.

   Pretend that you are a pair of tennis shoes. You've done all kinds of things with your owner in all kinds of weather. Now you are being picked up again by your owner. Tell what you, as the tennis shoes, think about what's going to happen to you. Tell how you feel about your owner.

   Purpose: Expressive
   Primary Trait: Expression of feeling through elaboration of a role.

2. One of the things you do in school is to write reports for science, social studies, and other subjects. Imagine that you are going to write a report about the moon for your science class.

   In the box below are some facts about the moon which you can use in your report. You may also add other facts that you remember about the moon from your reading and classwork, from television, or from listening to people.

   Write your report as you would tell it to your class. Space is provided on the next three pages. Be sure to report the facts in an order that will be clear and that will make sense to your classmates.

FACTS ABOUT THE MOON

made of rock
mountainous, contains craters
covered with dust
no air or water
no plant or animal life

Purpose: Explanation
Primary Trait: Explanation through significant ordering of details.

3. Imagine that your principal asked for suggestions about how to make things better in your school. Write a letter to your principal telling him just ONE thing you think should be changed, how to bring about the change, and how the school will be improved by it. Space is provided below and on the next two pages. Sign your letter "Chris Johnson."

Purpose: Persuasion
Primary Trait: Persuasion through invention of arguments and appeals appropriate to a particular audience and situation.

In addition to the assignment, a four-point scale, called a scoring guide, was developed for each exercise. The definition of each score point described the degree to which the primary trait is apparent in the student's paper. Typically points were neither given nor withheld because of flaws of grammar or mechanics, although, in fact, NAEP often considered these as "secondary traits" and assessed them as well. A typical scoring guide is reproduced below:

1 = NO ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ROLE OF TENNIS SHOES

Student compositions assigned to this category lack the fundamental element of the primary trait; that is, they do not show evidence of a clearly established entry into the imaginary role of tennis shoes. Some of these writings are marked by a tendency to write <u>about</u> tennis shoes, or <u>about</u> tennis, or about other related activities. They are, in effect, limited to observation and do not achieve participation in the role. Other writings that would be assigned to category 1 might imply or project a role that cannot be definitely established as that of the tennis shoes.

These compositions may be so vague that they do not contain any details that are applicable either to the role of tennis shoes or to the status of having an owner, or they may contain details that are inconsistent with the role of tennis shoes or with the status of having an owner.

2 = ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ROLE OF TENNIS SHOES
Writings assigned to this category explicitly or implicitly establish the role of tennis shoes, but the elaboration is insufficient to endow the role with a distinctive personality or relationship to the owner. Some of these compositions, for example, simply report shared experiences with the owner without implying or directly expressing any feelings about the experiences of the owner. Others express feelings with little or no reference to particular experiences to account for the feelings, and still others report contradictory feelings or experiences and thus project an inconsistent personality or relationship to the owner. All such writings would be assigned to category 2.

3 = CLEAR ELABORATION OF THE ROLE OF TENNIS SHOES
Compositions in this category not only establish the role of tennis shoes, but also elaborate the role with details sufficient to endow it with a clearly identifiable character, personality, or relationship to the owner. Although successful in clearly elaborating the role, these compositions contain passages of irrelevant details, of mere reportage lacking in expressive purpose, of highly generalized reportage, or brief changes and shifts away from the dominant personality or relationship to the owner. Overall, writings in this category are less consistent, concrete, or appropriate in elaboration than category 4 papers.

4 = VIVID AND CONSISTENT ELABORATION OF THE ROLE OF TENNIS SHOES
Student writings assigned to this category consistently elaborate the role with vivid details that project a distinct personality and relationship to the owner. Often highly inventive, these compositions are for the most part very carefully elaborated and they contain few, if any, lapses or irrelevancies in detail.

The Problem

The obvious difficulty with the PTS for instructional use is the development of a workable curriculum of primary traits. Despite the interest in PTS, theorists and researchers have not been able to develop a list of traits which are "acceptable" as embodying the principles of PTS theory. Indeed, although PTS has been used for district-wide evaluation of students' writing skills, the exercises used are commonly those created and used by NAEP. Discussions in the literature of PTS also confine themselves to the same four or five commonly accepted primary traits and to the same situations. That is, the persuasive exercise is commonly a letter to an authority figure advocating a change or defending the status quo through rational argument. The primnary trait list envisioned by Lloyd-Jones has yet to be discovered.

During the June workshop, it became apparent that the lack of definition was creating problems for cooperating teachers. Staff presentations in the workshop had focused on several methods of assessment and, of course, on PTS. Practice in using scoring guides developed for PTS exercises was provided as was help in trying to create class assignments based on PTS principles of audience, purpose, and mode. It became obvious that collaborating teachers were uncomfortable with their own understanding of primary traits and were skeptical of their ability to define them:

- "I still need more practice and information on other primary traits. Has NAEP identified others, or do we need to identify them before we can address guides and scoring?"
- "I'm concerned that there are such different interpretations of seemingly focused assignments."
- "I enjoyed this afternoon's struggle with PTS."
- "PTS seems more confusing as the days roll on."
- "I'm still not certain I will be where I need to be at the end of the workshop tomorrow and feel a definite hesitancy about being able to assign a valid primary trait to a given assignment."

Methodology

Because our study was designed to describe classroom use of the Primary Trait System which was new to teachers, we did not attempt to control through selection procedures, who would participate in the study. We intended to focus on teachers in elementary schools and junior high schools. This consideration was largely determined by the fact that the two guidebooks written by Klaus were aimed at the elementary and junior high levels. However, we included one high school teacher.

We also wanted to include a number of teachers working in urban and suburban settings, although we were not interested in comparing their performance. Finally, we had hoped to select teachers who had had training in "process" writing. It was our feeling that many of the teacher attitudes and skills associated with "process" writing were necessary for using PTS. We had neither the time nor the resources to provide a thorough grounding in current writing pedagogy research and practice and hoped to "short-cut" this need through selection procedures.

As it happened, some of the teachers in our project had not had prior training in teaching "process" writing although ultimately only one such teacher remained in the project. Table 1 below shows the distribution of participating teachers by grade taught:

Grade Level	Number of Teachers
2/3*	1
4	1
4/5*	1
5/6*	1
6	1
6/7*	1
7	2
8	2
11/12*	1

*Split Class

Of the eleven teachers who completed the project, five were from urban schools and six were from suburban schools.

Documentation

Data about use of PTS were collected in several ways. Each week, participating teachers completed and forwarded to staff a log of their activities in the target class. The log collected information on frequency of writing instruction, topics taught during the class, assignments given, use of PTS in specific ways (formulating assignments, responding to drafts, etc.), the nature of pre-writing activities, etc. Teachers were asked to attach any writing assignments, scoring guides, or handouts to the log.

In addition to logs, each teacher was observed by project staff in the classroom at least once. Following the observation, the teacher was interviewed about what had occurred in the class. During the interview, questions about activities reported on the log forms were also clarified.

Finally, on two occasions after the June workshop, collaborating techers were invited to attend "booster" meetings to discuss their activities, share problems and solutions, and to report specific assignments which they had created. Copies of all forms used may be found in Appendix 1.

Part II: Teacher Vignettes

Context Variables

Before explicating the uses which participating teachers made of PTS, it is important to note some of the very different contexts in which teachers explored its instructional applications and the possible effects those contexts had on the teachers' level of use. Although the project staff's early intent had been to involve teachers with some training in and experience with process writing, several teachers were in fact included who had had little or no such prior experience. They were willing to participate precisely because they expressed feelings of inadequacy in their preparation and wanted to remedy that. One teacher said that she set some goal for improvement for herself each year and that her goal this year was to improve her ability to teach writing. Other teachers in the project not only had a good deal of training but had conducted workshops in process writing for other teachers.

Several teachers had new assignments this year which required a great deal of adjustment on their parts, particularly when the new assignment was to a lower grade where they had to accustom themselves to students who had less fully developed skills than had their former students. One teacher in this situation used PTS minimally during the data collection period; another used it a great deal and with considerable enthusiasm. In the latter instance, the teacher had a colleague nearby who was also participating in the project. It seems doubtful that that factor (presence of a colleague) contributed significantly to her use of PTS although it may have had some effect; a more significant influence probably was the emphasis placed on writing at the district level and the availability of a composition text which appears to relate well to PTS. In the two schools where there was only one participating teacher, one made extensive observable use of PTS and another made very little.

The teachers less experienced in the teaching of writing generally made less use, or at least less well-defined use, of PTS than those more experienced, although at least one of the more experienced teachers made little observable use of it as well. Use seemed to have some relation to grade level taught; teachers of lower grade students seemed to find the

scoring guides less useful in terms of explaining to students why a paper was scored as it was or in terms of students being able to use the scoring guides in scoring their own or peers' papers. It was more difficult for teachers to spell out the differences between 1, 2, 3, and 4 categories in detail and more difficult for students in lower grades to understand the distinctions. Since participating teachers taught everything from second grade through high school, a wide range of sophistication appears, understandably, in the use they were able to make of PTS.

Teachers varied widely in their perception of PTS as a time-saver or time-taker, and lack of time is a constant refrain in most of their classroom lives. Some are clearly in teaching situations that allow more time to be spent on writing than is true with others. A teacher whose primary responsibility is remedial reading is unlikely to devote (or to be encouraged by others to devote) a lot of already limited time to writing, although the reading specialist in the project did, in fact, see writing as a means of improving reading. A teacher who deals with hundreds of students each week in a laboratory situation simply does not have the time for the same kind of feedback and individual help as a teacher who sees the same class of students each day, and is also less likely to be responsible for giving students grades, all of which are factors that may contribute to someone in that situation making less use of PTS scoring.

Another factor mentioned earlier deserves emphasis. One of the participating districts has adopted a composition text for junior high level which seems to relate to PTS by virtue of its emphasis on purpose in writing and ways of attaining purpose. Other districts had no such text, which left teachers more on their own in creating assignments and devising systematic presentations of strategies through which the assigned purposes might be accomplished. Just how much the presence of the textbook influenced the use of PTS by teachers in that district cannot be ascertained; there was a range in the amount of use that individual teachers made of it within the district but all made some use and several made, by comparison with others in the project, extensive use.

In summary then, some of the context variables which probably affected participating teachers included:

- assignment to a grade not previously taught;
- training in writing received prior to joining the project;
- number of students in the target class;
- number of students in the teacher's total "load";
- presence of a colleague engaged in the project;
- grade level taught;
- teacher's perception of PTS as a "time-saver" or "time-taker:
- presence of a text which emphasizes purpose.

In the remaining sections of this paper, we will present vignettes of each teacher, focusing on the use which each made of PTS. These will be followed by a discussion of categories of use made by teachers. Finally, we will discuss these uses, and draw some tentative conclusions about the ways in which Primary Trait System can shape insturction in writing.

Teacher A

The school is a Center for Expressive and Receptive Arts, a magnet school that focuses on teaching all pupils speaking, writing, listening, and reading skills. There are approximately 450 students, grades K-8, about 60% black and the remainder white. It is located in the inner city near a major highway; the windows in the classroom of the participating Teacher A reveal vacant buildings across the street and a generally run-down neighborhood. The classroom itself is the largest in the school and Teacher A believes that students like to come there in part because they appreciate having time in a place where they are not crowded. (Classes often have more than 35 students this year due to dwindling financial resources and teacher layoffs.) At one end of the room are tables with space for five or six children per table; they sit on backless stools. At the opposite end of the room is a carpeted "stage" with rows of backless benches facing it. The room is pleasant and colorful, with lots of materials available.

The class involved is a Communication Skills Lab and Teacher A conducts the lab for K-4 students. She also teaches reading part of the day, working with groups of students sent to her by teachers in self-contained classrooms. She has an aide for the lab classes.

The stated purpose of the Communication Skills lab is to "enhance and reinforce the skills taught by the regular classroom teachers." The school staff wrote guidelines for the labs but unit planning is left to the lab teachers. Objectives and outcomes of the writing component of the guidelines are:

I. Objective: To emphasize the mechanics of writing (basic)
   Outcomes: 1. Writing four types of sentences with correct mechanics
   2. Vocabulary notebook
   3. Spelling notebook

II. Objective: To emphasize writing content (cognitive)
   Outcomes: 1. Reports
   2. Book reports and reviews
   3. Business letters
   4. News articles

III. Objective: To emphasize the process of writing (affective)

Outcomes: 1. Original prose (descriptive, persuasive, rhetorical)
2. Original poetry
3. Reviews
4. Short stories
5. Friendly letters
6. Reports
7. Script writing

When Teacher A agreed to participate in the project she told the interviewer that she had had no pre-service training in the teaching of writing and had been reluctant to take the assignment as Communications Skills lab teacher. (She had been a first grade teacher for much of her career). Although she acknowledged that she had written and illustrated materials for use in church school and had once won a student essay contest, Teacher A maintains that she does not like to write but does like to teach writing. Her approach is to set a topic, give students some opportunity to discuss it, encourage them to spell phonetically and not worry about mechanics as they write, have students read their writing to the aide or another student who may suggest changes and then, if time allows, read their work to the entire class. She seldom has students rewrite in "final" form since she has each group only twice per week for 45 minutes at a time. She doesn't "red mark" student papers; sometimes she grades "S" if a student has completed the assigned work or "U" if work is incomplete or "out of sorts". (Lab teachers do not give grades on the school's grade cards).

Classroom observation bore out this approach. The class consisted of 27 second and third graders, many of them "repeaters". Teacher A reviewed with them orally the contents of a filmstrip they had seen earlier on rule-making (the film had been about a pie-eating contest in which there had been no rules). They discussed what happened when there were no rules. Teacher A then gave them an assignment: to pretend that they were the school principal and to write a letter to parents informing them of the school rules. Purpose and audience were clearly indicated. Each child was to write his/her rules, read them to a table mate to be sure they were clear and then, if s/he wished, the student could read the work to the observers.

Teacher A and aide distributed student "logs"--writing tablets-- and students began to write, some of them discussing the assignment quietly with others at their table. Teacher A told students that today they did not need to focus on their handwriting and could print rather than do cursive writing if they chose. She and the aide moved around the room, occasionally asking questions of individual students to help them clarify the rules they were writing. As they finished, many students read their work to the observers.

When all had finished, students moved to the stage area and most read their work to the entire group. Teacher A reminded them how an audience should behave and that a presenter should speak loudly enough for all to hear. She commented after each reading, usually on whether or not they had written rules in their letters as assigned. (A few had no rules or only one; most had written two or three rules). She was direct about pointing out when a student had not done the assignment but had, instead, written a letter that contained no rules (or when students didn't follow rules they written), but nearly always made a positive comment as well. A few students did not want to read aloud and were allowed to "pass" but admonished to "get ready."

Teacher A told the class that the next activity would be to combine all the rules they had thought of into a single letter which they would then prepare and send to the school principal.

During the post-observation interview Teacher A expressed her frustration at having too little time to evaluate student writing or to give students the individual help they would need to revise and refine what they write. She recognizes the need for revision and sees that as a next step which time constraints prevent her from taking because she is responsible for working on speaking, listening, and reading skills each week as well as writing. Her intent is that by the end of the year each child will write a "book" in which the writing will have been revised and refined. Eventually she will have some lessons on mechanics; for the time being she is pleased that students are getting something written and seem to be enjoying coming to the lab.

Teacher A interprets PTS as giving clear directions for writing so that children know what they are expected to do and evaluating based on whether or not they followed those directions. She says that she reads student papers differently since becoming involved with PTS; it gives her a focus. Her focus, in turn, helps children know what to look for in their papers. Thus far when she grades papers (she often does not) she scores only "1" or "4", with 1 meaning that the student did not follow directions and 4 meaning s/he did. Her thinking is that the primary students cannot now be expected to understand subtler categories. However, she wants to refine the distinctions so that they will be understandable to the children.

Teacher A has found filling out the logs a chore because she is so pressed for time and the forms do not seem to "fit" her situation well. On the three that she completed, she reports having used PTS for formulating assignments, analyzing/understanding/assessing student writing, responding and making specific instructional suggestions, and for deciding on the next activity.

Teacher B

The school is a magnet school that focuses on Individually Guided Education. It is located along a major urban thoroughfare which divides industrial and residential sections of the inner city. It serves a body of 425 kindergarten through eighth students, with a 55% Black, 44% White, and 1% Asian, Spanish, and Native American racial mixture. The teaching staff is organized into teams in the grade levels K-2, 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8. Within and across these teams, instructional efforts are coordinated to provide each child with a custom-tailored educational experience.

The school ascribes to the City Board of Education curriculum objectives for writing instruction in grades K-3, 5, and 8. In grades 4, 6, and 7 writing objectives are teacher developed along with those taken from D.C. Heath, Harcourt/Brace/Jovanovich, and Scott Foresman language series texts. Teacher B and C teach in this school.

Teacher B has taught for 17 years and has had no prior training in teaching process writing. This year she has fourth graders in a self contained classroom from 9:15 to 3:45 daily. She would like to see her students be able to write clearly enough to let their audiences know what they are saying by the time they leave her class. Her students keep folders of their writing products and she charts their individual progress in her grade book of letter grades for grammar and PTS scores for successful completion of writing assignments.

At the summer workshop, she wrote that one of the most important characteristics of PTS for her is that it will give her some ideas for different kinds of writing assignments. It would also give her ideas for further development of the original assignment. She noted that PTS has focused on the idea that for a writing assignment to be relevant for a child, it needs to have a clearly defined and clearly explained purpose. Although she felt that PTS is supposed to help her to grade papers more quickly, or give her something to look for besides punctuation and sentence structure, she wrote that she wasn't sure that it would.

She developed a plan at the summer workshop to have her students become pen pals with the students of a friend who teaches in Tennessee. She looked forward to setting a specific purpose for each letter in either expressive or explanatory modes. She still intends to try this approach.

On 7 September 82, she reported using PTS for formulating an assignment requiring students to describe one thing they saw this summer. She also used PTS for analyzing student writings, scoring, making instructional suggestions, and deciding upon the next activity as a result of this assignment. Her comments on the log indicated that this was just a "warm up" session for both herself and her class in using PTS and that she might try to have more discussion before writing next time.

On 13 September 82, she reported using PTS for formulating an assignment requiring students to write a story about their best friend, telling about why they like this one and what they do together. Again, PTS was also used for

analyzing their writings, scoring, and deciding upon the next activity. She noted that this assignment produced better sentences and longer paragraphs because the children knew more and were more enthusiastic about the subject matter.

On 20 Sept. 82, she reported using PTS to formulate an assignment requiring students to write about a relative, describing this person, how they feel about him/her, and some of the things they do together. PTS was also used for analyzing and scoring. She noted that the lesson accomplished what she hoped it would, but that she wished she had been more specific about just what should have been included in the story.

On 4 October 82, she reported using PTS to formulate an assignment requiring students to pretend to be a desk and tell some things that happened to them in past years as well as some things that happened with their owners this year. This time PTS was also used for analyzing, scoring, making instructional suggestions, and deciding upon the next activity. She commented that it went well and that PTS really helped her to see if students are able to follow directions and get across the idea they are trying to get across. "Flowery language might sound good," she noted, "but if it doesn't say anything, what use is it?"

On 7 October 82, during the mid-implementation workshop, Teacher B commented that she had thought the summer workshop would be prescriptive and therefore was disappointed. But, she said that PTS had helped her to focus on what she wanted and to develop a grading system in which the first grade was for what they wrote and the second grade was for mechanics.

On 11 and 18 October 82, she gave an assignment in which students pretended to be a kickball. They had to write three paragraphs: one to tell about their first owner and how they got into the street, one to tell about their life at their school, and one to tell about their future. This assignment took two weeks to finish because the role elaboration was a new idea and the story was more than one paragraph. She noted that it turned out well even though it took a long time and required many rewritings. Later, she mentioned that she used PTS to score the papers.

The class observed on 25 October 82 consisted of 24 fourth graders who sat in traditional rows of individual desks facing the door and the chalkboard. The room was bright and cheerfully decorated in orange and yellow, with lots of plants.

Teacher B commended the class for the job they did on being the kickball, and reminded them to finish rewriting and to turn in that story. Then she told them that they must move on to "How To..." sentences. She entertained comments from the class on how to start sentences in a paragraph (topic sentences). The class then offered suggestions on how to start subsequent sentences in the paragraph (next, second, third, finally, etc.)

Teacher B mentioned the holiday coming up, acknowledging that some children might not be interested in celebrating it for religious reasons, and directed the class to write a "How To Carve A Pumpkin" paragraph. She began the "prewriting" activity by asking students what is done first. Then, students volunteered in sequence each subsequent step in the carving of a pumpkin. If an answer was out of sequence, Teacher B asked if that <u>really</u> came next, and if not, what did? When they had finished orally carving the pumpkin, she invited the class to begin writing. She told them that if they needed to know how to spell something that they should tell her and she would put it on the board. During their writing period she offered good handwriting tips, and made suggestions on proper form, grammar, and mechanics as she circulated around the room. When each student finished, s/he took the paper to Teacher B and she made suggestions for revision. By the end of the class all the students were either correcting errors or working on another task. She told them that on the following day they would reread their own stories and then get together in pairs and make corrections.

In summary, Teacher B has used PTS for formulating assignments, analyzing student writings, scoring, making instructional suggestions, and deciding upon what the next activity would be.

In the post-observation interview she commented that the students no longer mind the task of rewriting because they are proud of their finished products. She said that she uses PTS all the time as a scoring technique for whether or not the students have done what they were supposed to do. She mentioned that her biggest problem was in coming up with ideas for what students can write about (she creates her own curriculum for teaching writing).

She said that the strength of PTS is that it works, because it helps her to know what she wants her students to do. On her final log she commented, "We've done several stories assuming a role, some explanatory writing and two "how to" assignments. Perhaps I'll be adventurous and try some persuasive writing next week."

Teacher C

Teacher C teaches at the same magnet school as Teacher B. She has taught for eleven years and clearly places a high value on helping students arrive at and/or maintain a positive self-image. Her training for writing instruction includes Language Encounter and creative writing workshops and she uses some ideas from the Gateway Writing Project. Teacher C is enthusiastic about teaching writing and typically has students do many writing activities, often involving the expression of feelings, having students write about things they know, things they like and things they have done. The participating class, for instance started diary writing in September.

The participating class is a homeroom class of fifth and sixth graders which typically spends 25 minutes of the 45 minute class period on writing. The classroom is covered with a variety of brightly colored materials, including many samples of student writing and a prominently displayed set of teacher goals for the year. Many green plants contribute to the pleasant atmosphere. Desks are arranged on either side of the room facing each other, debate fashion.

A prepared statement of the school's philosophy of language arts instruction states that "All language skills complement and reinforce each other; therefore no language skill should be taught in isolation...The ultimate goal of the language arts program is to enable the pupil to become a functioning member of the world community." The objectives of the program are these:

"The pupil will

... use the skills of reading to develop vocabulary, to comprehend what is read, and to enjoy literature.

... develop the ability to speak clearly and to listen effectively.

. demonstrate the ability to express thoughts clearly in written language while observing the acceptable standards of usage and grammar, punctuation and capitalization.

... recognize the need for correct spelling and develop a sense of responsibility to spell accurately in all written work.

... strengthen basic handwriting skills and develop the ability to write legibly in all written work.

... utilize reference skills by applying them to meet individual needs."

No writing text is provided.

On the day the class was observed, students came in quietly and worked briefly on their diary writing. After a few minutes, Teacher C gave them an assignment in persuasive writing: "Convince me that you deserve a Halloween party Friday. You know from our talk yesterday that you haven't all behaved as you should. Write me a letter to convince me that you deserve the party anyway." She said to the observers that she would be looking for points of elaboration in the writing. A few moments after making the assignment she realized that five of her students who are members of a religious group which does not celebrate Halloween would need to have the assignment modified (since they do not observe Halloween). For those students she revised the assignment so that they were to write a letter convincing her that they should have time Friday to view a film and enjoy some treats. In an earlier persuasive writing assignment the teacher used the traditional PTS exercise involving writing a letter to a landlord to convince him to allow the writer to keep a dog.

The children worked intently and quietly on single pages of paper given them by the teacher. During the writing she took care of chores such as collecting lunch money, answered questions from individual students and talked to several quietly about her having contacted someone in their family (probably about the behavior problems referred to earlier). Once the teacher left the room to bring in a large cardboard box; students continued to write quietly in her absence and, for the most part, ignored her dismantling of the box which she did in the center of the room. There was an air of comfort in the room; students moved about freely, perhaps to get additional paper from the teacher's desk, but in an orderly fashion. When the teacher made a request or a comment to a student she nearly always ended it with "dear," spoken without affectation and with apparent warmth. The rapport between teacher and students was obvious; when she asked whether some of the students wished to read their writings aloud they were comfortable saying that they did not and she seemed at ease with their decision. They did give her their letters as they finished them and, in most cases, she read the work immediately, perhaps making a comment to the waiting student. Observers also were given the opportunity to read the letters, nearly all of which used as a reason why the teacher should allow them to have a party that they would improve both their behavior and their work in return for this gift on her part. One zealous student even volunteered to make up homework to do if she didn't give any! Many mentioned that they would be willing to take the consequences of their previous bad behavior, which, interestingly, was one of the teacher goals prominently displayed on the wall. A few argued that they had not misbehaved and, if they were not allowed to have the party, would be penalized for the bad behavior of others. In the observed class there was no response to the letters other than the teacher verbal comments. However, she reported on the one log which she completed that classmates sometimes read each other's writing and that the instructional coordinator and principal are also used as audiences for some assignments.

Teacher C also reports frequent pre-writing activites of a variety of kinds, and considerable class discussion. Her instruction about techniques for writing includes explanation of ways to express feelings, to write in a

descriptive way, use of sensory words, and the like. She often gives assignments which allow them to write about personal experiences, things they like and things they know about. When they started to do role elaboration exercises she "talked them through it for the first couple of times, then they got the hang of it." She does not give grades in language to the homeroom class because they are given elsewhere. The PTS scoring system does not meet her needs because she doesn't stress scoring "in the exact way that is shown in the materials." She charts individual progress through her oral responses to the students, through peer checking and self-checking. On diary writing she marks a plus or minus which tells the students if they stuck to the assignment. On occasion students score each other's papers; for a time they used + or -, then she tried using 1-10 but went back to + or - because it seemed to fit their needs better. In early October the students completed a Student Writing Checklist on which they checked either "Yes" or "I need practice" to questions such as: Do I use complete sentences? With capital letters? With punctuation? Do I avoid "run-on" sentences? (Or do I use "and","and then", "and so" a lot?) Do I avoid sentence fragments? (Or do I sometimes forget to finish my sentences?) Do I avoid using the same old words over and over? Do I try to make my writing more interesting by using specific words? adding descriptive details? adding facts and examples? adding conversation? using different kinds of sentences? using clear time sequences? using my imagination? Do I proofread my work to find my errors? Do I rewrite some of my stories or reports after I have made corrections, changes, or additions? Do I have another special problem in writing? What is it? Finally, the checklist provided space for each child to say what problem s/he would work on in the next few weeks.

While the children in this class are about at or at grade level, the teacher says that they are not yet adept at knowing what to write when asked. Her intent is that the students will consider writing fun, that they will become, in the writing process, better readers and speakers as well as better, more confident writers.

The teacher states that she believes PTS is an important approach; she likes the stress placed on the purpose of the writing rather than on

mechanics. She defines PTS now as "writing with a purpose with evaluation for such a purpose." During the post-observation interview she commented that one of the strengths of PTS for her is that it gave a title for the purposes of writing--it helped her realize that she was teaching expressive, persuasive, and expository writing although she had not been talking about it in those terms. She plans to continue using the PTS ideas although she has no intention at this time to use the scoring system.

Teacher D

The school is a magnet school, The Academy of Basic Instruction. It is located in a predominantly white, middle-class section of the city.

Teacher D, a reading specialist, speaks enthusiastically of the training she received as part of another CEMREL writing-related effort: the development and use of a handbook called Oral and Written Communication: Strategies and Resources for Students and Teachers. She has used many of the lesson plans in that handbook for student writing activities in the past.

The participating class is a remedial reading group of five fourth and fifth graders which meets daily for forty minutes. They meet in a small classroom which is a converted teachers lounge, with one side of the room lined with storage lockers. Teacher D has displayed a wealth of pictures, and lists of words that students are learning on the available wall space. VX Study Cards (from the Ancillary Reading Center--ARC--Program) are used for vocabulary development. The ARC program is a multi-sensory approach with a tracking strategy that moves from sounds into words, words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs.

Students had been given the Tennis Shoes exercise which Teacher D used for diagnosis of language art skill deficiencies. She could guess from their writing the sorts of things that would give them trouble in reading: main ideas, details, language mechanics, spelling, and so on. She did not "red mark" the papers but, along with the students, had discussed whether they rated 1, 2, 3, or 4. Her scoring guide, posted prominently on the wall, distinguished the categories this way: 1=no establishment of role, 2=little elaboration of role, 3=good elaboration of role, and 4=inventive and

consistent elaboration of role. Teacher D expressed pleased surprise at how well these students were able to assume a role.

When the class was observed they were given another role elaboration assignment, which was displayed on the board and also given verbally. It said: "Pretend you are a piece of clothing. You've done all kinds of things with your owner in many places. Tell how you look and feel. Tell about your life with your owner. Tell how you feel about your owner." Teacher C had written a list of clothing words on the board which students read and she pointed out blends and digraphs they had been studying (sh<u>ir</u>t, sk<u>ir</u>t). She then passed around a box containing pictures of different pieces of clothing and students selected the one they wanted to pretend to be. She also suggested a possible title and open-ended beginning sentence, told them that they could use the dictionary but hoped they would first try to sound out the word. After that, students wrote for about twelve minutes. One student asked if she should write a topic sentence, and Teacher D was pleased that she had remembered. Teacher D told observers that she had deliberately given little instruction with this assignment because she wanted to see what the children would remember from previous classes. She also commented that her goal for the day's writing was that students would write and comprehend five coherent sentences.

Students were asked to share their writing aloud. One student responded, after which teacher and class reviewed the assignment and discussed how well he had followed directions. She also told the student to put on his paper the score he thought he deserved and he gave himself a 3 "because I didn't tell how I looked." Other students agreed that 3 was the appropriate score. The next student did not want to read his paper but was willing for Teacher D to read it aloud. She did so, and the author then said that he should get a 1 because he had talked <u>about</u> a shirt rather than <u>as</u> a shirt. In response to Teacher C's question about how he could remedy that, the student was able to change his beginning sentence to reflect first person point of view. The teacher assured him that he would have time to revise the following week. At that point the class time was over.

The following week the students worked on a similar assignment, this time working together and writing a single piece on the board in which they practiced role elaboration by pretending to be a sock.

During the post-observation interview Teacher D talked more about the relationship between writing activities and the development of reading skills. She finds that writing improves student spelling also. Students reading aloud what they have written have an opportunity to have a successful reading experience, and Teacher D emphasizes listening to what they are saying when they read what they write as a help to comprehension. Listening and following directions are very important, she stresses. She is pleased that the children are demonstrating increasing comfort with writing now, whereas earlier they hesitated and could not get started when she gave a writing assignment. No reading grades are given by this teacher; she does keep charts showing skill strengths and weaknesses for each child, and each child has his/her own activity folder in which work is kept.

The teacher feels that PTS is useful, that it is adaptable to her situation and that children can understand the distinctions in scoring 1, 2, 3, 4. Because of the nature of her work as a reading specialist, she does not begin work with students until several weeks of school have occurred, so that she did not have the opportunity to begin data collection until fairly late into the reporting period. She reports using PTS to formulate assignments, to analyze and assess student writing, to make specific instructional suggestions, and to decide on future activities. A problem is that she doesn't have time to write more specifics for each assignment beside each numerical score on the scoring guide she presently uses. She plans to do more expressive writing exercises using other strategies than "pretend you are a ....".

Teacher E

Teacher E teaches in the same school as Teacher D. The participating class is a "split" sixth/seventh grade. Teacher E has taught eighth graders in past years and expresses some frustration at the achievement level of her students this year. She has put considerable emphasis on writing in past years and has been proud of the individual student's books that her classes have made. Her preparation for teaching writing includes participation in a summer institute of the Gateway Writing Project (local version of the National Writing Project). Participation in this Writing Project's June workshop served to reinforce knowledge she had acquired from her other learning experiences related to writing instruction.

The class of 26 students was observed working on the Tennis Shoes exercise, which was continuing from a previous day. A few students had completed the assignment and had made a book shaped like a tennis shoe with a crayon-colored cover. Those students who were still working on the assignment were divided into five groups, each of which had a teacher-selected peer editor who read the others' papers and made verbal comments or written comments on a separate sheet pointing out places where some error in form existed. Editors were instructed not to make corrections but to point out such things as sentence fragments, run-on sentences, lack of indentation where needed, insufficient margins. After revisions were made, editors turned in to Teacher E those papers that were ready to be put in final form.

At the end of a half hour, writing activity was concluded and students moved chairs back into full class format in preparation for oral recitations of two poems they had been assigned to memorize.

In the post-observation interview Teacher E commented that the plans she made in the June workshop for using PTS had had to be modified because of her assignment to a sixth/seventh grade class when she had expected to teach eighth grade. Her students need to work on "basic" writing skills and she is constantly having to adjust her expectations because they are not as skilled as she had hoped they might be. Students had not been accustomed to revising and rewriting their work. Now they usually write twice a day and most like

writing activity once they have a finished product to be proud of. Teacher F wants them to learn to be more specific; she also wants to sharpen their listening skills and believes that writing experiences help to do that. Individual student progress is charted by reference to their journals.

Teacher E uses what she terms a "conglomerate" approach and no single text is provided. Although she did not submit any completed log forms, she reports verbally that she has used her knowledge of PTS in formulating assignments and in assessing, although she does not use a scoring guide. She records whether or not an assignment is done, but does not give scores or grades on the writing. At this time she is not ready to judge the strengths and weaknesses of PTS because she wants more time to work with it, and she definitely plans to continue exploring how to use it in her situation.

Teacher F

The school is located along a major thoroughfare in a suburban community characterized by many large, old but well-kept homes with spacious lawns and lots of trees. It is mostly a middle to upper-economic status area. The school complex consists of several buildings connected by roofed walkways, with trees and flowers in the courtyard areas.

The school district voluntarily participates in a metropolitan area desegregation plan and accepts a limited number of students from the City Schools.

The school district provides minimal guidance for the writing curriculum. Objectives are specified and pre/post tests are given; teachers are required to explicate their own lesson objectives and these are to be placed on the board in view of students. A committee chose a Scott-Foresman text that gives writing assignments and rubrics for scoring which Teacher F uses as a reference.

Teacher F is a veteran of 21 years of classroom teaching who says that she likes to write and to teach writing. She has been involved in the Gateway Writing Project for three years and has given workshops about the project to other teachers at her school. Other training includes a workshop on the Weehawken writing model and considerable writing in aesthetic education courses at a local college. She teaches sixth grade language arts.

In the fall pre-test, all students wrote on the same topic at the same time. Papers were graded (anonymously) holistically. Teacher F felt that not much was learned from the exercise that was helpful in planning instruction.

In the entry interview Teacher F commented that she uses literature as a base for much of what she does; she has five units of study with a writing component in each. Her approach to the writing process is to begin with the sentence: a topic sentence followed by supporting sentences with specific details. She uses peer editing by couples and students do a lot of rewriting and revision. They do their writing in spiral notebooks and occasionally read their work to small groups or to the entire class. Her writing instruction techniques include those she learned in the Gateway project, "power" writing, sentence-combining, use of figures of speech.

During the interview she said that she hoped and believed that PTS would help her give the same grade to the same paper every time she graded it. Thus, PTS would be a fairer grading system than holistic scoring. It would make directions public and the whole class would better understand the assignment and the scoring.

When observed, the class of 25 sixth graders was directed to read from the board and copy into their spiral notebooks the objectives for the day's lesson: (1) to write a "Dear Dracula" letter, and (2) to answer a "Dear Dracula" letter. This assignment was part of a unit titled Spook Spectacular, which had begun with a study of the historical Dracula and the various fictional versions that have appeared in film. Teacher F commented to the observers that this was the first instance where she had adapted an assignment from previous years for use with PTS, as opposed to creating a new one, and that she had found it difficult.

Teacher F told students to imagine who they'd like to be for Halloween if they could have any costume, play any role they'd like. She directed their attention to some Halloween-related materials in the room, including a cardboard castle, and passed around pictures of various masks to give students ideas for characters they might assume. Students were also given copies of a fact sheet about Dracula and a sheet with two sample letters. One of the sample letters contained a punctuation error which students were asked to locate and correct. Teacher F reviewed reasons for capitalization and punctuation and pointed out the block form which they were to use. The class also read the sample letters to see if they had followed the accompanying directions. Purpose and audience for their own letters were discussed. Then Teacher F directed them how to position the heading of their letter to Dracula and suggested that they make up a funny or spooky address. Students wrote headings and some of them read theirs to the class. Then Teacher F pointed out proper position of the salutation, after which students were directed to write silently for five minutes. During that time Teacher F moved around the group, usually shaking her head negatively when students raised hands or tried to ask a question during that time. She gave brief responses to one or two questions.

When the five minutes had elapsed, those who had finished traded spirals with another student (others kept on writing) and, after reading that student's letter to Dracula, were directed to pretend they were Dracula and write an answer to the letter. They were given about five minutes to write their answer, during which Teacher F moved among the group and made occasional suggestions. Then she reminded them to re-read and edit their answer, after which they were to score their partner's letter to Dracula using a 1-4 PTS scale (posted on board). They were told to ignore mechanical errors in deciding on the score. Then the spirals were returned to their owners, who scored the other student's answer to their letter in the same way. At this point students were allowed to discuss with their partners the reasons for the scores they gave. Teacher F then asked for volunteers to read both letters in their notebook and to say what scores had been given. Classes discussed whether or not they agreed with scores given and, if not, why not. Students were told to be prepared to rewrite a final version of their letters on "good" paper the following day.

On the six logs she submitted, Teacher F consistently reported using PTS for formulating assignments, for analyzing and understanding student writing, and for assessing and grading student writing. She says that using it enables her to have the students do more writing because she can score papers faster. Making a scoring guide is the most difficult part of using PTS for her. She does not score on mechanics but finds relatively few mechanical errors on her students' papers. This may be because she does not score papers until they have been revised and edited, but she also believes it is because teachers in the elementary grades are doing a good job of teaching mechanics.

In the post-observation interview Teacher F expressed great enthusiasm for PTS. She says, "You can adapt anything to PTS. It takes time and lots of preparation, but the more you do it, the easier it gets." In addition to the observed class, she has used it in her four other classes. She integrates all the language arts into her writing activities, and teaches writing at each period of each day except for one period set aside for reading. A reading book and a textbook are provided but she has not used them so far this year; she expects to make some use of them soon. She has created six writing units which she regularly uses, and she also keeps a "trivia box" which contains cards which tell something exciting that has happened in history on each day of the year. That box provides stimulus for a number of writing activities.

She cited an example of how she uses the PTS for formulating an assignment: On Veterans' Day she took a card from the trivia box which gave information about how the unknown soldier was chosen for the tomb at Arlington National Cemetery in 1921. The assignment was to take the role of the unknown soldier, to give that person a personality and an identity, to tell how the person died and how he felt about being chosen to be interred at the National monument. During pre-writing discussion the class discussed the voice, purpose and audience and how the scoring would be based on whether or not identity and manner of death had been established and feelings about being chosen as the unknown soldier were expressed. Teacher F says that her students love the PTS scoring method and, after a little practice, can tell whether a piece of writing is a 1, 2, 3, or 4. Often there is class discussion and teacher input about why the person whose paper they are reading

did not get a 4 and what could be done to make the paper a 4. Students regularly write in their spirals, score each other's work, and then rewrite on separate paper the assignments that Teacher F is going to collect. She scores those papers and enters the PTS score in the grade book but uses letter grades for things like grammar or mechanics. Her students have lots of weaknesses in spelling, she says; she does not have time to teach spelling out of a spelling book, but uses vocabulary words from the reading program for spelling lessons.

Teacher F's goal is for each student, by the time s/he leaves the class, to be able to write something and to want to rewrite often enough so that they have made it into something they'd be really proud to show to anybody. She finds that the skills of the students she gets seem to be better each year and that most of them catch on really fast. They are accustomed to her fast-paced teaching and are used to having five to ten minutes to do actual drafting. She stresses that she <u>always</u> has pre-writing activity and that most of the time the pre-writing takes longer than the writing itself. Then, of course, they get time to rewrite later. They are accustomed to getting into groups for peer response and do it quickly now.

In the interview Teacher F commented that she has used PTS for diagnosis, but not nearly as much as she would like to. She has not used it for deciding what the next activity should be.

Teacher G

This school district serves a growing area of suburban St. Louis County. The district includes two senior high schools, three junior highs and nine elementary schools. For the last four years, the district has employed a language arts curriculum coordinator, initially full-time, now in combination with teaching at the senior high. Among other steps which the curriculum coordinator has undertaken are the adoption of a new composition text at the junior high level, the introduction of sentence-combining activities at all grade levels, the institution of a district-wide writing assessment, and

In the third week, the teacher spent time teaching methods of organization and of selecting details. The major writing was an exercise from the text which had an identified trait and for which a scoring guide was prepared. At this time Teacher G observed that students were producing longer and better organized paragraphs. She felt that there were signs that students were becoming "more comfortable with writing". She, however, expressed her own discomfort about her primary traits and about the score point definitions.

Students continued to work on the composition from the prior week and, for the first time, the teacher invited the class to engage in peer response groups. Initially, peer partners were asked to read for surface errors: run-on sentences, fragments, and misspellings. However, peer responses went beyond this to comment on the reviewer's reaction to the writing. Moreover, the teacher reports that PTS score categories were used by students for assessing early drafts of the composition.

During the next week, students concentrated on word choice exercises from the text and engaged in practice activities which were shared with the class. This type of activity continued through the next week with an emphasis on specific, vivid and descriptive language.

When we observed Teacher G's class, students were working on revising drafts of a paper which was intended to describe the school to an adult who had never been there. Students worked in triads, reading papers and then assigning a score of 1-4, justifying it in terms of the score category definition. After assigning a score, the peer evaluator was to offer two specific suggestions for improvement of the paper. Following this activity, the class, as a whole, read and discussed some of the papers.

Several things were observed which were extremely interesting. First, real revision of papers could be seen. Drafts were marked with errors signalling movement of paragraphs; whole sections had been scribbled out. Although the paper was to have explained school, many students in the class were writing in an expressive mode. These focused on the student's feelings about school, classes, and teachers. None of the peer editors seemed to

notice this confusion of mode. The tacit rhetorical strategy of this assignment was the discovery of a principla of organization which would make clear the explanation. However, most students seemed content with writing long lists of details, often using a chronological description of a school day and/or a physical description of the school building.

Students treated their colleagues' writing respectfully, for the most part, but seemed to gain little help from the scoring guide definitions. It was refreshing to hear the teacher remind the students of the difference between reading for content (and responding to it) and reading for surface feature errors. Despite the apparent (from the logs) emphasis on precisely such surface features, the teacher was able to help her students respond to the content of the writing. Later, as she pointed out, there would be time to correct spelling and subject-verb agreements.

Teacher H

Teacher H is the Language Arts Department Chairwoman at the junior high school where Teacher G works. She has taught for eleven years, always in this system. In class she presents an organized, neat, almost stern demeanor which is perhaps a way of counterbalancing her relative youthfulness and attractiveness. She is probably an adherent of the "don't smile before Thanksgiving" school.

Teacher H has participated in training offered through the Bay Area Writing Project affiliate at the University of Missouri. In her entry interview she said that she has used the process writing approach and peer partner editing intensively in her classes since that experience. While her instruction is by no means tied to the district's newly adopted language arts text, her emphasis is a blend of attention to the more mechanical aspects of writing simultaneous with development of interest in writing.

Teachers' logs for six weeks were completed by this teacher. Beginning on the first day of instruction, students were required to write. During

those first three days of class, Teacher H spent 100 minutes with her target class. On the first day, students wrote a "friendly letter about what you want to learn this year." On the second day, they wrote a paragraph in which they were to write about themselves from the point of view of someone else in the class.

While this assignment was picked up from the basal text, it is clearly identifiable as a typical PTS assignment. The trait is the expression of perception through role elaboration. A scoring guide was prepared in which score points are defined by the degree to which students sustained the role ("someone else") and provided detail of description.

On the third day, students evaluated their paragraphs using the scoring guide. The teacher then explained how she would apply the scoring guide, giving examples of each score point. While these papers were not assessed for grades, the teacher had used PTS to formulate the assignment, to analyze the students' writing and for responding to students' work.

Further, class discussion and instruction had been centered around role-taking and the difference between observation and inference. It should be noted that this instruction fell directly into the major writing task and is consistent with the normal junior high school writing curriculum which devotes much attention to differences between opinion, judgement, attitude, inference, and observation.

In the second week, Teacher H continued to teach observation, selection of detail, and role-taking. The major PTS assignment presented students with pictures of animals in various situations and asked for a paragraph written from the animal's point of view. During this week, the idea of peer editing was introduced. Students were given the scoring guide before they began to write and used the guide to edit one another's papers.

During the first three days, classtime was spent largely on this assignment. On Thursday, two verse forms--haiku and limerick--were introduced and on Friday, vocabulary development was undertaken.

On Wednesday of the following week, the district-wide diagnostic test of writing was given. The assignment was based on the classic PTS exercise, "Tennis Shoes". Most of the instruction for that week dealt with symbolism, simile and metaphor. On Friday, a writing assignment, stimulated by the painting American Gothic, was made. This assignment occupied the class through the next week. Peer editing of the writings occurred on Monday and Tuesday,
with final editing on Wednesday. Two class periods were spent on reviewing for and sitting on exams on word choice and usage.

Teacher H's use of peer editing becomes quite clear through this assignment. On Friday, the students looked at and talked about the painting. They also discussed the scope of the assignment, which was to write a short story based on the picture. They began draft writing in class, with the author and his/her peers reading it. Responses to the draft tended to focus on content and personal reactions to the draft. This pattern of writing and submitting drafts to peers continued for the next three class days. On Wednesday, the teacher collected the final copies and read them, attending to content, mechanics and grammar. The "content assessment was based on a PTS-like scoring rubric, but a total impression grade was awarded each paper."

Word choice, levels of usage, and audience were the foci of instruction. No major composition assignment was given because these skills "should be" carried over into any other writing, although in-class draft writing was reported for three days of the week.

During the class period of observation, students were divided into four groups. Each group was to define one of the score points for the writing assignment which had been made. The assignment was recorded on the blackboard:

Primary Trait--Expression of attitude through significant ordering of detail.

Assignment--Write a paragraph which shows how you feel about school. Use vivid, sensory detail to create the image you have of school. Let the paragraph reveal your feelings, as good description should.

For this assignment, students created the following scoring guide:

1--Wrote about the topic but didn't create a vivid image and didn't reveal all of his feelings. Needs improvement.

2--Not very descriptive, content makes sense. Needs improvement on unity and organization. Unclear descriptions, gets off the subject a little, needs improvement in word choice.

3--Has covered the topic. Some vivid detail. Connections somewhat clear between images. Most description leads you to the same image. Some sensory details. It reveals most feelings and some opinions.

4--Paragraph should contain vivid description and detail. It should show clear emotion and create a clear image. All material should relate to topic in an organized pattern and should not be opinion.

The students' initial definitions were quite interesting. A striking quality of each definition was its lack of precision: "needs improvement"; "gets off the subject a little"; "not very descriptive"; "some vivid detail"; "reveals most feelings". This vagueness could have been related to the fact that the students hadn't actually written to the assignment yet and it, therefore, was not very concrete to them. It might also have been related to an attempt to write a teacher-like definition, rather than one which reflected their own understanding. The initial definitions were altered through subsequent discussion with the teacher, so that clearer distinctions among levels were achieved eventually. What is positively striking about even the initial definitions, however, is the sense that unity is important, as is description.

The important thing, though, is that students are attempting to define ways to solve the problem posed by the exercise. They are quite conscious of how the writing might succeed, by what criteria success would be gauged. The ability to formulate the scoring guide and to discuss it suggests that these students are approaching writing in a more engaged, conscious way than many others do. The consistent use of the scoring guides for peer editing purposes has surely contributed to the students' ability to generate their own scoring guide which, the teacher hopes, will influence their own writing.

During the June PTS workshop, the teacher wrote the following:

1. PTS establishes a definite purpose in writing each assignment.
2. It limits the student's focus so he can "master" one level or type of writing trait (skill) without worrying about other traits. In light of this, I do not feel PTS would work well in rating assignments which might have several "purposes". Rather, I would use it to have students focus on each of the purposes separately in drafting stages. An example of this kind of assignment might be the creation of a short story in which I would be looking for characterization, setting, plot development, point of view and in which the student decides what the purpose of the story will be--entertain, teach a moral, expound a theme, etc.
3. PTS also will help me keep the focus of my grading clear throughout a set of papers and will (hopefully) allow my students to understand the reasons behind my evaluations, allowing them to redefine what they were expected to accomplish and how they may do so more completely or acceptably.
4. I see PTS as being more relevant to the drafting stages of an assignment rather than the final presentation, although the PTS guide would also serve as the focus of rating "content" achievement in the final presentation.

This teacher's extensive use of PTS for peer editing is not surprising, given the emphasis she has placed on peer editing in the past. In fact, in her entry interview she described the use of peers in a structured method she had formulated for helping them "discover" their topic when she allows them to choose what they will write about. Because she finds that deciding on what to write about is a big issue for junior high age students, she has used a system by which they list potential topics, free write on one of the topics for four minutes and then have a peer partner review the first draft and respond in writing to the content and clarity. The writer then either revises in a second draft or changes topics. Another peer editing follows, this time focused on organizational and editorial issues. Typically she has given credit for each draft and each peer edit as well as the final draft.

Although her June writing regarding PTS does not use the words "peer editing", Teacher H later pointed out that that is what she was referring to in number 2 above when she speculated that she would use PTS "to have students focus on each of the purposes separately in drafting stages."

Teacher I

Teacher I teaches in the same district as Teachers G and H, but in another building. This school serves 800 seventh and eighth grade students who change classes hourly. These students take classes on a semester basis. The current semester started in September 1982 and will end in January 1983. The district to which this school belongs has adopted the SRA curriculum for writing instruction.

Teacher I has been teaching for 16 years and has participated in training offered through the Bay Area Writing Project affiliate at the University of Missouri. This year she has seventh graders in two language arts classes daily. One class is totally reading and the other, in which she uses PTS, incorporates writing, spelling, vocabulary and grammar. She uses the SRA Composition Skills 1 and the Warriner's 7th grade (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich) texts for instruction in writing. She wants her students to be able to do descriptive writing and persuasive writing, to follow directions, and to compose well-constructed paragraphs by the end of this semester.

She also teaches two remedial classes with a different scope and sequence of instruction and she is planning to use PTS with these students later in the school year.

Her students keep a writing folder of graded papers and she keeps a grade book of their scores to chart individual progress. Her grade book has PTS scores for writing and letter grades for the other aspects of language arts.

At the summer workshop, Teacher I wrote that 1) PTS establishes a specific purpose for a piece of writing; 2) to a degree, PTS takes some of the subjectivity out of writing evaluation; 3) hopefully it will shorten the time involved in the evaluating process; and 4) it forces the teacher to carefully analyze a writing assignment. While at the workshop, she envisioned using a PTS exercise and scoring guide she developed with a literature survey in which

the students would imagine they were one of the characters in the dinner table scene in "Owls in the Family," so that they would help their audience see and feel the experience they would describe. However, the class has not yet progressed to the point of using this exercise.

Since that time, she has used the "Tennis Shoes" exercise as a pretest assignment with a 0 to 4 scoring guide that she developed. The pretest on Friday, 9 September 82, took the students 50 minutes to complete and it took Teacher I 40 minutes to score. She used the results of the pretest to decide upon what her next class activity would be. The following Tuesday, 8 September 82, Teacher I read and the class discussed the results of the assignment.

She reported that the assignment accomplished what she hoped it would, except that she thought the exercise would clarify for her students the reasons for a 0 to 4 rating, and this did not occur.

The teacher used PTS again during the week of 27 Sept. through 1 Oct. 82. This time the students were required to write a description of their cafeteria at lunchtime using sights, sounds, and smells. Students were to complete the assignment during their lunch periods. The teacher-developed scoring guide this time had a 1 to 4 rating scale. Again it took Teacher I 40 minutes to score the papers. She reported that for this assignment, she used PTS for analyzing student writings, scoring them, and responding with specific instructional suggestions. This assignment also accomplished what she hoped it would and she noted some improvement over that last trial.

On 7 October 82, at the mid-implementation workshop, Teacher I commented that brighter students are uncomfortable with PTS because they are used to receiving a grade reward. She added that the 0 to 4 scoring guide had been too sophisticated for her students.

During the week of 18 through 22 October 82, Teacher I used PTS for formulating an assignment requiring the students to write a poem on "These are the things I love" using specific nouns and descriptive modifiers. She

reported using PTS for analyzing student writings, scoring, and making specific instructional suggestions on this assignment, also. This time it took her 25 minutes to score the papers. It accomplished what she hoped it would.

During the week of 25 through 29 Oct. 82, she reported using PTS for formulating an assignment requiring students to use specific nouns and to rewrite passages substituting vivid verbs. She reported using PTS with this assignment also for analyzing student writings, scoring, making instructional suggestions, and deciding upon the next activity. This assignment also accomplished what she hoped it would.

The class observed on 1 November 82 consisted of 27 seventh grade students who were average to low achievers. The teacher reports that they have been very positive all year towards writing. They sit at tables put together in differing configurations throughout the classroom. The room was decorated in blue and gold (the school colors) and green, with pumpkin faces and posters of Garfield making up for the absence of windows to brighten the room.

During this particular class period, the students went over the 1 to 4 scoring guide Teacher I developed for the a set of papers. The teacher explained what each category meant and how she had used it to score their papers. Then, she distributed their papers and mentioned problems they were having with form and mechanical errors. She instructed them to use these papers to create a fantasy environment and reminded them to be specific about what that would include. Again, they were to use sights, sounds, and smells in their descriptions.

She had them begin by listing items under each of the three columns both on paper and on the board: Sights Sounds Smells. Then, they were instructed to work these items into a well developed paragraph. She suggested the kinds of things their lists might include, allowed them time to write, and told them that they would talk about it the next day. As students were writing, Teacher I circulated among them and made specific suggestions on what could be added.

A few days later, the students used peer evaluation forms to score their rough drafts and Teacher I scored the rewritten drafts of the fantasy environment papers.

In summary, this teacher has used PTS for formulating assignments, for analyzing/understanding student writings, for assessing/scoring, for responding/making specific instructional suggestions, and for deciding upon what the next activity would be.

During the post-observation interview, she said this about the strengths and weaknesses of PTS in her situation: "After doing the first couple of scoring guides it was such a laborious process that it wasn't really a time saving device. But I'm hoping that with more practice it will go faster. It was very helpful in organizing my end of being very specific in instructing the children to write what I want them to write." She intends to continue trying different methods which will include the use of PTS.

Teacher J

Teacher J teaches in the building in which Teacher I is department chair. She has participated in training offered through the Bay Area Writing Project affiliate at the University of Missouri. This year, she instructs eighth graders in language arts classes daily. Her classes include instruction in speech, composition, vocabulary and grammar. She uses the SRA Composition Book 2 for instruction in writing, and she wants her students to become literate speakers, writers, and readers of English by the time they graduate. She has adapted the SRA scoring guide to the primary trait system of scoring for descriptive writing.

She customarily had kept track daily of each step of the writing process by using checks, check plusses, and check minuses on student drafts which are kept in journals and folders. Then, when her students would do their final papers, she would look back at the checks leading up to the final product to see if they had come a long way, and she would grade accordingly.

Now, however, she finds PTS very helpful in replacing the checkmarks because the students always wanted to translate checks into grades, and it gives her a way of getting them to do their homework without having to deal with a multitude of grades for everything. She says that PTS has made her feel more confident about what her system of scoring means, and that by the third assignment, the students have caught on as well.

At the summer workshop, she envisioned using PTS with chapter 1 of the SRA book on the composing process, stressing the 3 steps in the creative process: seeing, selecting, and telling. The students would take an everyday object, pretend to see it for the first time, and then describe it in detail. Afterwards, they would take the same object, forget its normal use, and then describe invented uses for it using explanation through the use of examples. The students in fact did get a chance to do this exercise with a teacher developed scoring guide.

During the week of 7 through 10 September 82, Teacher J used the "Tennis Shoes" exercise as a pretest essay assignment. She reported using PTS to formulate the assignment, to analyze student writings, and to score them. The lesson accomplished what she hoped it would.

During the week of 13 through 17 September 82, she reported using PTS to formulate an assignment requiring students to discuss selecting details to achieve a particular purpose, to discuss point of view, and to discuss connotation and denotation, leading up to written assignments from the SRA book which had students to write paragraphs supporting two topic sentences, to write descriptions of the classroom from differing points of view, and to write an original limerick or haiku. PTS was also used during this week for making specific instructional suggestions. The class did the scoring from the teacher-developed guide in peer groups, but she found that they tended to score the papers of their friends higher than she would have.

Teacher J commented at the mid-implementation workshop on 7 October 82 that PTS helped her in formulating assignments. She said that now when her students read their papers aloud, they comment on how to make them better.

She also said that since they are doing more writing, she has noticed fewer mechanical errors.

The class observed on 1 November 82 consisted of 23 eighth grade students who are slow to average achievers. They were seated at tables in somewhat uniform configuration throughout the room, with equal numbers of boys and girls at each table. The room, with windows, was blue and white, decorated with student writings and colored drawings on green background on three of its four walls. The assignment dealt with essays of opinion.

Teacher J asked what was nice about spring in the author's piece they were reading from the SRA book. She pointed out the purpose of a topic sentence and the need to support opinions if one wants to convince or explain to the audience why one feels a certain way. She emphasized using logical and not emotional reasoning. At this point there was the sound of the tone over the intercom and the students immediately went to lunch.

While the students were away at lunch, Teacher J commented that this would be their day to write gripes in their journals and to develop opinion sentences into paragraphs.

When the students returned from lunch, Teacher J immediately explained the assignment and gave examples of how to do it. They were to write a 5 sentence paragraph with supporting details convincing the reader of their opinions on a topic they would choose from a list they had from a previous lesson.

Teacher J read sentences from the SRA book, and students volunteered to identify which method was used to convince the reader: fact, example, logical reasoning, etc. Then, she repeated the assignment, reminding them to formulate a topic sentence first, to give examples or reasons, and to be specific. She emphasized sticking to the topic they choose. She mentioned that this assignment would not be for a grade, but that someone in class the following day would decide how convincing it is. The students wrote quietly until the end of the period.

In summary, Teacher J has used PTS in formulating assignments, analyzing student writings, scoring, and making specific instructional suggestions.

In the interview conducted during the classroom visit, Teacher J commented that the students are writing much more and that they are no longer having problems getting started. She said that the main thing she has gotten from the use of PTS is the elimination of the guilt for not grading. She had always explained to the students that she was not looking at grammar or mechanics when she was looking for whether or not they had done the assignment. So, PTS made her feel really good about that.

She said that she never passed out a formal scoring guide to her class. Instead, she put on the board one sentence and the class discussed whether or not it did what it was supposed to do to get a 4.

She felt that PTS had really made her look at exactly what she wanted from her students and that sometimes she found that she wanted too much. PTS thus helped her to be more realistic in what she asked her students to do.

Teacher K

Teacher K's school district serves a growing area of a suburban county. The district includes two senior high schools, four junior highs and nine elementary schools. For the last four years, the district has employed a language arts curriculum coordinator, initially full-time, now in combination with teaching at the senior high. Among other steps which the curriculum coordinator has undertaken are the adoption of a new composition text at the junior high level, the introduction of sentence-combining activities at all grade levels, the institution of a district writing assessment on junior high level, the introduction of a Young Author's Conference as a language experience approach to writing for elementary students, bookmaking at elementary level, and participation in the WRRP. Five of the teachers in the project work in the school system. Four of them are assigned to the junior high; the coordinator is herself the fifth person.

Teacher K, the language arts curriculum coordinator for the district, is, in every way, unique among collaborating teachers in this study. First, she teaches at the high school, in an elective course for juniors and seniors. Second, she has the most thorough professional training (she is the only participating teacher with a doctorate) and has studied rhetoric--both classical and modern--and shows its influence in her teaching. Moreover, she, more than any other teacher, seemed to understand the real value of collaboration between teachers and researchers. Therefore her weekly logs were always accompanied by journal-like writings in which she discussed her experiences trying to discover the instructional uses of PTS.

The early activities of the class involved getting her students to know one another, introducing them to the principles of "process writing" and establishing a climate of mutual respect and cooperation among apprentice writers. From the first assignment, Teacher K has developed PTS-like scoring rubrics and has shared them with students. Typically the rubrics were given out when first drafts were returned.

In the second week of class, Teacher K explained editorial formats for class assignments and discussed the research project in which they were engaged. After reading the first class set of papers Teacher K remarked that the term--primary trait--was causing her trouble. Rather than regard PTS as a discovery, she saw it as a reformulation of the principles of classical rhetoric. She also remarked that the scoring guide wasn't helpful for individual papers. She felt that the scoring guide offered a "pre-packaged" response to students, rather than the individualized response she prefers.

A major insight occurred to Teacher K in the next week. She discovered that, in seventeen years of teaching, she has taught much expressive writing, quite a lot of explanatory writing, but very little persuasive writing. Moreover, she was able to locate very little help in teaching persuasive writing in any of her normal resource books. She could not articulate ways to make appeals to an audience. As a result of a conscious appraisal of her own teaching, she had hit upon a major area which she had never taught adequately. She concluded her log with this comment:

"I wonder how many teachers like myself have wonderful assignments for writing but have not worked out the instructional methods to support them."

During the fourth week of the course, Teacher K began to involve the students in creation of the scoring category definitions. These were then used to guide peer responses. By this time, students were almost ready to write expository prose.

The teacher's expository assignment asked students to compare poems by Auden ("The Unknown Citizen") and E. A. Robinson ("Richard Cory"). This assignment led her to speculate about the relationship between writing and reading. The class discussions of the poems had revealed a disappointingly shallow understanding on the students' part of the poems' meaning. Students did not comprehend the subtle and ironic ending employed by Auden although Robinson's "hit 'em over the head" twist seemed successful. As Teacher K led the students into a deeper understanding of the poems, the writing skills students had worked on earlier began to be transformed into reading skills. They recognized extended metaphors, the consistency of poetic personae and how the poets used these devices.

Student discussion in the following week revealed to Teacher K that comparisons among modes were being made by students. Moreover, rhetorical strategies which were appropriate to various modes began to show up in students' work, and to be recognized in unexpected places. Also, the class came to a new appreciation for the conventions of grammar and mechanics when they saw the ambiguities that are created by violations of grammatical convention. "Grammar" was seen as a way to avoid problems of incoherence.

By this time, when students were producing their second ("nearly perfect") scoring guide, the teacher began to see the scoring guide as being potentially useful. They had seemed too general; but as the students developed them, the guides became an indicator of the strategies important to the writer, a formative tool composed by students and used by them as editors.

Subsequent activities used models--both literary and didactic--to help students experiment with various kinds of writing for different effects. Christenson's Cumulative Sentence was examined as were examples of "new journalism". By this point, students' writing was closely tied to their ability to read, analyze, and employ stylistic devices associated with specific literary models.

In an interview with the class, students discussed several aspects of their experience in Teacher K's class. While they enjoyed creating the scoring guides, they were uncertain of their real value. A "4" was seen as useful as a pre-writing definition of what ought to be in the paper, while all other categories were "unfair" since they focused on what students had not done.

Interestingly, students did not object to writing to teacher-set assignments since these provided a structure within which students were free to work. But, the peer groups were felt to offer more useful feedback than teacher comments since the peers are "on our level".

Part III: Uses of PTS

Teachers participating in the project found several pedagogical purposes for PTS. In this section, we review and discuss them. It should be noted that teachers varied in their willingness to try PTS. On at least two occasions, however, teachers were brought together to share their experiences. It was hoped that such sharing would stimulate interest as well as serving to remind teachers of the support available from the group.

Diagnosis. By "diagnosis" we mean a process which begins with the teacher asking students to write to a specific task. This writing is done early in the school year and is undertaken after a minimum of instruction. Once the samples are written, the teacher analyzes the papers to get a general idea of the students' strengths and weaknesses. Usually, then, this general impression will influence the subsequent planning and delivery of specific lessons.

Three occurences of PTS for diagnosis were reported among the cooperating teachers. Teacher F used a classic PTS assignment for her class pre-test but then evaluated them holistically. Teacher D, who is a remedial reading specialist, used a PTS assignment as a diagnostic device and then used the student papers as a way of predicting reading difficulties: main ideas, details, spelling, etc.

Teachers in one district decided to use the PTS exercise "Tennis Shoes" as the junior high school district-wide pre-test. Four junior high school teachers from the district, including two of three department chairs and the district language arts coordinator, are participating in this study. They persuaded their colleagues to use the PTS exercise as the pre-test which will be filed in each student's writing folder and which provides a baseline for gauging writing development through junior high.

Formulating Assignments. Every teacher in the project reported using PTS to formulate assignments. This use included identifying the purpose of the writing as well as clarifying speaker/subject/audience relationships. One teacher said "PTS works because it helps me to know what I want to do", a statement made in one form or another by almost every participant at some point in the study.

What is less clear is the extent to which thinking about PTS influenced assignments that do not appear to meet PTS criteria. An examination of the assignments made reveals a great variation in the specificity and elaboration contained within the assignments. Some do not clearly indicate a mode or purpose nor do they seem to identify a primary trait. Sometimes the lack of specificity resulted in individuals in the same class writing to different modes.

For example, one class was asked to explain what school is like. Some individuals wrote papers which were clearly explanatory: they described the physical properties of the building and/or detailed chronologically a school day. Other students began writing chronologically, but with the emphasis on their individual day. This seemed to lead naturally to writing about their reactions to individual teachers and courses. Thus, they converted (some might say subverted) the task to be expressive. This was an ideal opportunity for the teacher to point out the different strategies individuals had used and to show students how they had changed the purpose. Instead, all papers were accepted.

Analyzing Students' Writing. By this, we mean the use of PTS and the scoring guides to understand what the student wrote and how it might have been improved. This is different from assigning a grade in that it provides specific feedback to the writer about what he did and what he might do to improve his writing. It is an activity which the teacher undertakes in order to understand the writer as much as to understand the writing. Several teachers made use of PTS in this way, commenting "PTS really helps me see if students are able to follow directions and get across the idea they are trying to get across. Flowery language might sound good, but if it doesn't say anything, what use is it?"

Responding to Students' Writing. This activity is related to analysis of student writing, but goes to the next step: actually delivering feedback.Current writing research has shown the relatively minor value of much of the marginalia teachers often write on students' papers. For some of the teachers in the project, PTS provided a way of response. "PTS scoring is

useful for first drafts only, as a tool to improve student writings." This is an important insight. This teacher, as do several others, divides the development of a piece of writing into several stages. The first draft is the draft which verbalizes main ideas, shapes the argument, etc. Therefore, attention to mechanical and grammatical flaws may be counter-productive in the reader's response. PTS, with its emphasis on purpose, audience and rhetorical situation, provides a way of responding appropriately to the ideas expressed in the first draft. Once purpose and strategy are clarified, subsequent drafts can be used to tighten organization, smooth transition, and correct mechanics.

Evaluation/Grading. Given that PTS was originally formulated for evaluating writing, it may seem surprising that few of the participating teachers used it in that way. Partly this phenomenon can be explained by the fact that many teachers in the group do not grade writing since grading may result in a real reduction of children's willingness to write. Other teachers used PTS as part of a grading scheme, but also figured in points for grammatical correctness, mechanics, etc. For these teachers, PTS is too limited to use for generating a grade. However, it is interesting to note that one teacher said that "PTS gives me a better way to explain to parents what the students' grades mean."

Another teacher said that "the distinctions between the four categories are not clear enough to use as a grading tool." This is a curious observation, unless by "clear" the teacher means "comprehensive". It is true that in workshops intended to introduce teachers to PTS the most difficult point for teachers to accept is that a paper filled with spelling errors and "grammar" errors could merit a 4, while a mechanically perfect paper could rate only a 1. While teachers appreciate the perceived "objectivity" of the scoring guide, they are unmoved by its lack of attention to the traditional "knowledge" of English teachers: spelling, grammar, and mechanics.

Peer Evaluation. Many of the participating teachers used PTS for peer editing and evaluation. Charles R. Cooper describes peer editing as a potentially powerful activity but cautions that students need guidance when

functioning in the editor role. This guidance can be furnished, teachers found, by providing students with a copy of the scoring guide to use as a base from which to respond to other students' papers.

Typically, the students are asked to assign a score point from the rating scale to their peer partner's paper and then to justify their award in writing with reference to the score point's definition. This activity does at least three things:

1. It provides another opportunity for each student to examine the purpose and trait in each assignment. As such, it reinforces the student's prior learning in another "modality".
2. It helps the peer editor learn how to provide feedback which is purposeful and helpful.
3. It creates a genuine need to write, since the response must be written.

A logical followup to this activity was developed by several teachers in the project. Students were invited to create the scoring guides, articulating the differences marked by each score point. This activity could either be done as a pre-writing activity or as a step between the first and second drafts. In either case it helped students discover and correct weaknesses in their own papers.

Improved Reading. This use of PTS was a totally unanticipated outcome of the study. Teacher D, who is a remedial reading specialist, used PTS to help improve reading. Partly this is the result of her own emphasis on language experience, wherein children practice reading texts which they have written. Partly, however, this use of PTS is related to the motivation provided by the actual assignments. Teacher D mentions the case of one student who was often absent because of disciplinary problems. Yet, when he was in class, he specifically asked to be allowed to write his story. (Other participating teachers mentioned this same phenomenon: "problem" children asking permission to do the writing activity. While we do not know with certainty, it seems likely that this results from a need for self expression, which is often related to "acting out" behaviors and a desire to engage in a

task on which the student will be successful, since PTS does not penalize the student for his/her lack of control of spelling and mechanical conventions).

The other teacher who cited improved reading was the high school teacher. She observed that her students began to recognize "primary traits" in the texts they read as literary models. Not only were the traits recognized, but students could talk about their use and value in attaining the purpose of the text.

This attention to reading as a result of writing is not new in the research literature. However, the specific use of primary traits to achieve purpose in literature is provocative and deserves further investigation.

Part IV: Discussion and Conclusions

Before beginning our discussion of this research, it is important to remind the reader again of two constraints on our work. First, we worked with only eleven teachers. We made no attempt to construct scientifically a sample of tne teacher population. Therefore, the reader must be extremely cautious about generalizing from the experience of these teachers. Second, we tracked the teachers' activities for less than one school term. In one case, the period of teacher/student contact was less than five weeks. In no case was it longer than twelve weeks. Writing skill develops very slowly. For that reason, we do not speculate about change in students' writing skill. Indeed, we made no systematic attempt to collect or analyze students' papers. In only one case did we talk to students about their experience.

Nevertheless, the teachers engaged in this study did find a number of ways to utilize PTS and the principles inherent in it. While these uses have been described above, this section of the report will focus on only a few of these and will offer comments about the future implications of PTS.

Teachers in this project substantiated three outcomes of particular significance and helped identify two areas which deserve future attention. First, the three outcomes will be described.

1. PTS helped teachers clarify the purposes of instruction, and helped them to make clearer assignments. Although PTS ostensibly focuses the writer's attention on the purpose to be achieved, several teachers reported that in planning instruction they found themselves pushed to be more clear. Before they could identify the primary trait, they had to understand the purpose of the writing, and therefore the purpose of instruction. As a result, they planned more carefully and were able to deliver more sharply focused lessons. Moreover, the need to define with distinctness the various score points led to a new objectivity in grading and evaluating since personal preference was replaced with a public, pre-determined set of criteria.

2. PTS as an evaluation tool was more useful at some stages of the writing process than at others. None of the teachers who used PTS for evaluation was satisfied with it as a total measure. It is simply not sensitive to many of the factors which, to the teacher, comprise a well-written paper. However, these same teachers were pleased to discover that PTS was extremely helpful at the first-draft stage since it forced them to limit their view of the students' papers. Rather than trying to note all of the paper's faults, the techers focused only on the attainment of the primary trait. This provided enough information to the student writer to allow significant improvement without overwhelming--and discouraging--the writer.

3. PTS is a valuable device for indirect teaching. When peer editors used the PTS scoring guides to comment on their partners' papers, a second presentation of the instruction was made. However, here the student was not being asked to apply the instruction directly to his own case, but rather, to use the instruction while looking at how another student had solved the same rhetorical problem. This second chance to learn will result in students learning the material more completely, it is felt.

An important unanticipated outcome of the project was the effect of PTS on student reading ability. The relationship between reading and writing is suggested by the research conducted by schema theorists and provides some of the theoretical basis for the language experience approach to reading. Among participating teachers, two mentioned that their students' reading had been positively affected by PTS principles. The relationship deserves attention in further studies designed specifically to determine under what conditions and to what extent the relationship exists.

We opened this report with a discussion of definitions. Not the least of the difficulties which these teachers encountered was that of defining, or discovering a primary trait. While the teachers were quite clear about the three major purposes of writing, they were less able to articulate the trait. Unless this problem could be surmounted, teachers would be unable to continue

with the project. They would be forced to fall back on the grammar texts, or the pleasurable "activities" they were accustomed to.

Project staff gave this problem a great deal of attention. Finally it was decided that a reasonable synonym for "primary trait" was "rhetorical strategy". If the writing was based on a real communication need and if the need was to achieve one of several purposes, then we could imagine strategies for accomplishing the purpose, for solving the problem of communication. The rhetorical situation gives rise to particular strategies, or traits. When we look at a piece of writing, we can understand how it achieves its aim by looking at how the strategy is developed.

If this is true, then we should be able to identify a number of traits or strategies which could be classified according to the purpose with which they are associated. This could render a taxonomy of primary traits:

Expressive	Persuasive	Explanatory
- interior monologue	- comparison/contrast	- chronological order
- statement of personal values	- appeal to authority	- analogy
- role-taking	- deductive logic	- comparison
etc.	etc.	etc.

These, then, would form a teachable curriculum. It should be noted that the same trait might appear in one or more of the "purpose" columns. Whether these traits could be ordered in some sequential way is open to question (apart from the argument that Moffett, Britton, et al make that expressive writing is more closely associated with less sophisticated writers).

In his discussion of identifying kinds of discourse, Lloyd-Jones points out that he imagines that "most teachers practiced in creating classroom exercises will also create the situations first. Then they can analyze the rhetorical implications, placing the exercise on the model; this will serve as an aid in discovering the features which characterize writing in the prescribed mode." (Emphasis added).

In a sense, then, the score point on a paper represents its holistic impression on us. The definition of the point, however, is rendered in quantitative terms which say something about the use of the rhetorical strategy we're interested in: the primary trait. For purposes of informal assessment, rhetorical analysis after the fact is satisfactory for Lloyd-Jones. If, however, we want to convert this to a teaching system, we should define the traits and then devise the exercises:

Trait: Deductive argument is found in persuasive prose.

Objective: In this unit, students will learn to develop deductive arguments for the purpose of persuading others.

Evaluation: Write a letter to your principal explaining why you should be allowed to drive a car to school.

Scoring Guide:

1. Does not use deductive argument, but mentions driving to school.
2. Offers argument, but not in deductive style, or confuses premises with conclusions.
3. Offers deductive arguments, but premises and conclusions are only tenuously linked.
4. Offers strong deductive arguments or offers two separate arguments.

In fairness to both Lloyd-Jones and Klaus, it should be pointed out that they disagree with the identification of primary traits with rhetorical strategies. Klaus does allow, however, that this identification might have purely pedagogical value, although it ignores "the way that writing works in reality".* Of course it is precisely the pedagogical value that is of interest here.

The value of such an organization is that it would permit development of a curriculum of writing not based on the level of the sentence. It would also separate learning to write, in the best sense, from authentic, child-sponsored writing.

From analysis of teacher logs completed for this project, it is evident that teachers continue to instruct students in traditional English-teacher

*Private communication with one of the authors, September 4, 1982.

knowledge. Instruction continues to focus on correct word choice (affect/effect; it's/its; there, their, they're), on definitions of parts of speech; on organization in writing and on the avoidance of sentence fragments and run-on sentences. Often this results from a similar emphasis in the class text. But it's also the material that teachers know how to teach and that they claim parents want their children to learn. The result, of course, is that by the time the students are in high school they know the term "relative clause" but are unable to define it, even though they use relative clauses competently. By focusing on rhetorical strategies, teachers may be able to shift their attention off the sentence to a richer level. A taxonomy of traits would be required before teachers could abandon their traditional instruction.

Moreover, such a taxonomy could help teachers and students separate for purposes of teaching and learning the two distinct acts of writing and learning to write. Here we must be careful. Such a separation, if pushed too far, would be disastrous for writers. However, the sink or swim approach often seen does not seem to have any lasting effect. Teachers are quite competent to teach strategies for solving communication problems. Then strategies can be identified, isolated, taught, and practiced, much the same way that the subskills of reading or mathematics are. Then, when the need for such skill arises, the student is able to evaluate the situation and employ the appropriate rhetorical strategy. This identification of and direct teaching of rhetorical strategies was precisely the method employed by Teacher K with her high school class. Whether it might work for younger writers was not tested. However, the identification of strategies is a necessary first step without which the effort is doomed to fail. The pressure of time and the ready access to a text combine to make such an activity on a teacher's part highly unlikely.

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Appendices

Appendix I:

Forms and Documentation

CEMREL WRITING RESEARCH & RESOURCES PROJECT

TEACHER LOG

Name: _____ School & Grade/Class: _____

Date: (week of) _____

Mark the activities that occurred today.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1. Did you teach Writing or Composition?					
2. Time spent on Writing lesson? * if appropriate, other time students were learning to write					
3. What was the assignment? _____					
4. ~~Was this~~ a new assignment?					
5. ~~Was it~~ related to an earlier assignment?					
6. Teacher instruction in writing					
a) Giving a new composition assignment					
b) Explaining principles or ideas of how to write well (includes outlining, techniques for achieving a purpose, research paper methods, etc.)					
Specify: _____					
c) Teaching rules of grammar & mechanics					
d) Worksheets					
e) Other (Specify) _____					
7. Student pre-writing activities					
a) Experience (specify _____) (includes field trip, reading, school program, audio-visual presentation)					
b) Class discussion of "experience"					
of ideas for assignment					
of procedures for completing					
other _____					
8. Composition (drafting)					
a) In class					
b) Outside class (homework)					
9. Response to student writing					
a) Author rereads his own writing					
b) Classmates read it					
c) Teacher reads it					
d) Someone else reads it (Specify). . . .					
_____					

page 1

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
e) Response was written	____	____	____	____	____
f) Response was verbal	____	____	____	____	____
g) No response	____	____	____	____	____
h) Response marked or corrected mechanical errors	____	____	____	____	____
i) Response told reader's personal feelings related to content	____	____	____	____	____
j) Response commented on factual accuracy of content	____	____	____	____	____
k) Response commented on style, word choice, organization, tone, etc.	____	____	____	____	____
l) Response suggested general or specific ways to revise	____	____	____	____	____
m) Response suggested additional or alternative ways to achieve purpose	____	____	____	____	____
n) Response was a grade	____	____	____	____	____
o) Response was another form of assessment Specify _____	____	____	____	____	____
p) How long did it take to grade a set of papers? _____	____	____	____	____	____
q) How did you grade? PTS? Other? (Specify)_____	____	____	____	____	____
10. Revision (rewriting)					
a) Revision improved neatness, handwriting and appearance	____	____	____	____	____
b) Revision reflected teacher/reader suggestions	____	____	____	____	____
11. Did you use PTS (Primary Trait System)					
a) For formulating the assignment	____	____	____	____	____
b) For analyzing/understanding the student writing	____	____	____	____	____
c) For assessing/giving grades	____	____	____	____	____
d) For responding/making specific instructional suggestions	____	____	____	____	____
e) For deciding upon the next activity	____	____	____	____	____
12. Did the assignment accomplish what you hoped it would? How, (if at all), would you change it?	____	____	____	____	____

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. Other comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

P. T. 2

SCHOOL _____ TEACHER _____ LESSON TITLE _____

DATE _____ TIME: Start _____ End _____ Total _____ # OF STUDENTS ___ OBSERVER _____

SCHEDULE OF USE: daily 4 times/week 3 times/week twice/week once/week
(Please circle.) Mon. Tues. Wed. Thurs. Fri. At what time(s)? _____
Or at what period(s)? _____

DESCRIPTION OF CLASS ACTIVITY:

Please circle the word(s)/letter(s) that apply:

WAS PTS USED? Yes No

a. for formulating the assignment
b. for analyzing/understanding writing(s)
c. for assessing/giving grades
d. for making specific instructional suggestions
e. for identifying the purpose of writings
f. for deciding upon the next activity
g. for clarifying speaker/subject/audience relationships

COMMENTS:

page 1

Please circle the items that were observed:

INSTRUCTIONAL GROUPING:
(of those who participated in the class activity)

full class full class in groups certain group(s) only

TYPE OF ASSIGNMENT:

prewriting	new	class discussion	techniques	explanation
drafting	follow-up	writing from experience	rules	demonstration
revision	review	using worksheets	homework	practice

CHECKLIST OF OBSERVABLE FEATURES AND RESPONSES

Please check the items that occured during observation and circle any words or phrases that apply.

- ☐ First traits were defined, then exercises were devised.
- ☐ First exercises were devised, then traits were defined.
- ☐ The teacher/class/individual student(s) developed/used a scoring guide.
- ☐ The teacher/class/individual student(s) read own writings.
- ☐ The teacher/class/individual student(s) read the writings of others.
- ☐ The teacher/class/individual student(s) gave verbal/written response to writings.
- ☐ The teacher/class/individual student(s) corrected mechanical errors/grammar.
- ☐ The teacher/class/individual student(s) told personal feelings about content.
- ☐ The teacher/class/individual student(s) commented on the factual accuracy of the content.
- ☐ The teacher/class/individual student(s) suggested general/specific revisions.
- ☐ The teacher/class/individual student(s) suggested other ways to achieve purpose.
- ☐ The teacher/class/individual student(s) responded with a grade/other form of assessment.

NOTE: Please attach handouts, a copy of the lesson plan, and/or board notes.

Writing Research and Resources Project (WRRP)
IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. APPLICABILITY:

   a. Has your participation in our first workshop affected the way you are teaching and/or thinking about instruction in writing for your classes this year?

   b. If so, in what ways?

   c. Has your participation in the workshop been of any benefit to you in other ways?

2. PLANS FOR YOUR WRITING CLASS:

   a. Have you modified, changed or adapted the plan you developed at our summer workshop? If so, how?

   c. Does your plan still seem to reflect PTS?

3. CURRICULUM ORGANIZATION, STRUCTURE, AND MATERIALS:

   a. How do you organize your writing lessons? What kinds of planning and preparation activities are involved?

   b. Does a text underlie this course?

   c. If not, what does?

4. OBJECTIVES AND INTENTS:

   a. What is the intent behind this instructional approach? What do you want to see happen? What are the students required to do? What skills do you what them to acquire?

   b. How are these objectives related to other objectives in the curriculum?

page 1

5. METHODS:

   a. What do you do with students who do not have the necessary skills? Do you use the same materials with them? Do you group them separately? Do you use a different teaching technique? What really seems to work? What really doesn't work?

   b. What do you do when students are acting out?

6. STUDENT PROGRESS:

   a. How are you charting individual progress?

   b. What skills did your students come with? Are they all at about the same place in the curriculum?

   c. How close are they to acquiring the skills you want them to have?

7. WHAT IS PTS?

8. HOW HAVE YOU USED IT SO FAR?

9. WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF PTS IN YOUR SITUATION?

10. WHAT FURTHER PLANS DO YOU HAVE WITH RESPECT TO THE USE OF PTS?

WRITING CLASS OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

Appendix II:

Feedback to Teachers

CREATING A PTS ASSIGNMENT

1. Choose the mode of discourse you intend to teach and evaluate (expressive, explanatory, persuasive).
2. Choose which of the strategies essential to that mode you want to focus on. For instance, some of the strategies which might be chosen for each mode are listed below:

   Expressive writing:

   --ability to reveal feelings (directly and indirectly)
   --ability to role-play imaginatively
   --ability to free-associate productively
   --ability to employ figurative language

   Persuasive writing:

   --ability to create a credible voice
   --ability to stir emotions of particular audiences
   --ability to establish logical proof
   --ability to refute an argument

   Explanatory writing:

   --ability to describe a sequence
   --ability to explain a process
   --ability to explain by contrast
   --ability to paraphrase

3. Create a situation that calls for the exercise of the strategy you have chosen. For instance, if you want to know whether your students can write a formal letter that persuades through the use of logical argument supported by concrete detail, you must first construct an appropriate formal writing situation (e.g., a letter to a school board) and an issue your students are likely to have feelings about (e.g., smoking in school, cafeteria food).
4. Describe in detail four levels of quality by which you will evaluate student writing. For example:

   1. Paper does not adhere to the conventions of formal letter writing (e.g., form, grammar, spelling) or does not produce any arguments for or against the relevant issue. Such a letter would not persuade anyone of anything.
   2. Paper shows knowledge of formal conventions and may produce one argument for a position, but the argument is undeveloped and unsupported with concrete details. This letter, also, would not persuade.
   3. Paper clearly adheres to appropriate conventions, demonstrates audience awareness, produces several arguments for a position and supports at least one of the arguments with concrete details. Such a letter is likely to be read sympathetically.
   4. Paper goes beyond 3 in sensitivity to audience, in ingenuity of argument, amount of concrete detail and use of that detail in support of arguments. Such a letter would be likely to persuade.

Strengths and Weaknesses of PTS

PTS really helps me to see if students are able to follow directions and get across the idea they are trying to get across. Flowery language might sound good, but if it doesn't say anything, what use is it?

PTS scoring is useful for first drafts only, as a tool to improve student writings.

PTS gives me a way of looking at students' writings.

There is no time to write out specifics beside each numerical score, but PTS can be adapted to fit my situation.

It works because it helps me to know what I want to do.

There is no time to respond and grade all the written work of my students (teacher handles kindergarten through grade 4 classes in a communications lab).

PTS is helpful in organizing lessons and instructing students in what I want them to do.

The distinctions between the four categories are not clear enough to use as a grading tool.

PTS gives me a better way to explain to parents what the students' grades mean.

The approach is important in getting kids to write and enjoy writing.